

# AUTUMN BIODYNAMIC CALENDAR

By Rachel Pomeroy

## Harvesting

In general, if fruit is ready and weather suitable, harvest on a flower or fruit day during the ascending period of the moon.

- Ascending flower days are March 16, 17, 18, 27, 28; April 13, 14, 23, 24; May 10, 11, 20, 21.
- Ascending fruit days are March 20, 21, 22, 31; April 16, 17, 18, 27; May 14, 15, 24.

## Next Season's Buds

When harvest is over, it's time to work on the quality of the buds for next season. When about 70% of leaf drop has occurred and the buds are exposed, spray with biodynamic preparation 501. This will strengthen the buds for overwintering and bud burst. Use of 501 early next season will help to reduce internode length in the new canes.

For application of 501, choose an ascending fruit or flower day (given above) or a Moon-Saturn opposition day. Stir and apply 501 in the early morning.

- Moon-Saturn opposition dates: 15 March; 11 April; 8 May; 5 June; 2 and 29 July

## Sowing Seed

You may wish to sow a green crop or flowering herbs, or reseed the sward between some of the vine rows. Once the autumn rain starts, this is a good time to do it. Sow on the Moon-Saturn opposition day, during the ascending period (given above), or the day or two before full moon (given below).

Full moon dates are:

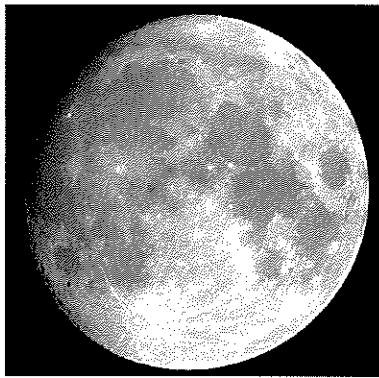
- 22 April, 22 May, 20 June, 20 July

## Apply Compost, Cow Pat Pit

The use of 501 is always on the firm foundation of regular use of biodynamic 500, the horn manure preparation, along with compost application and the use of Cow Pat Pit, compost teas, liquid manure or your own combination of these. These fertility-building activities are all best done during the descending period of the moon, with liquid applications being especially well absorbed just before full moon.

## Make Compost

Autumn is also a good time to make the next round of



compost, which includes the waste from pressing the grapes, along with straw, cow manure and fresh mowings from the sward between the rows. Plan your composting well in advance. Acquire organic straw or hay. If you don't have your own cows, collect cow manure from an organic property. All animal manures are good; but, in addition to other manures, at least a smallish quantity of cow manure, mixed to a slurry and spread over the brown or carbon material layer, will add good energy to the heap and speed decomposition.

## Apply 500

Autumn is also the prime time for applying biodynamic 500. Stir and apply this cow horn manure preparation in the afternoon during a descending period.

The dates of the descending periods are:

- March 4-16, with fruit days being 4, 5, 12, 13 March
- April 1-12 and 28-30, with fruit days being 1, 8, 9, 28 April
- May 1-9 and 25-31, with fruit days being 6, 7, 25, 26 May
- June 1-6 and 21-30, with fruit days being 2, 3, 21, 22, 30 June
- July 1-3 and 19-31, with fruit days being 19, 27, 28 July

## Node Days

Don't work with soil or plants at these times:

- 9 March all day
- 23 March afternoon
- 6 April before noon
- 19 April before noon
- 9 July all day
- 23 July after noon
- 3 May all day
- 16 May before noon
- 30 May after noon
- 12 June all day
- 26 June after noon

Using the planting calendar can help you order and accomplish all those autumn tasks in the vineyard. And it's good to know that by working with the cosmic rhythms, you are fully integrating the plants with their surroundings.

The dates given here are taken directly from the *Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Calendar 2015-2016*, available from [www.biodynamic.org.nz](http://www.biodynamic.org.nz).

*Rachel Pomeroy is a Tutor for the Certificate of Applied Organics and Biodynamics at Taruna College, Hawkes Bay.*

# ORGANIC

## WINEGROWERS NEW ZEALAND

## VINTAGE 2016 NEWSLETTER

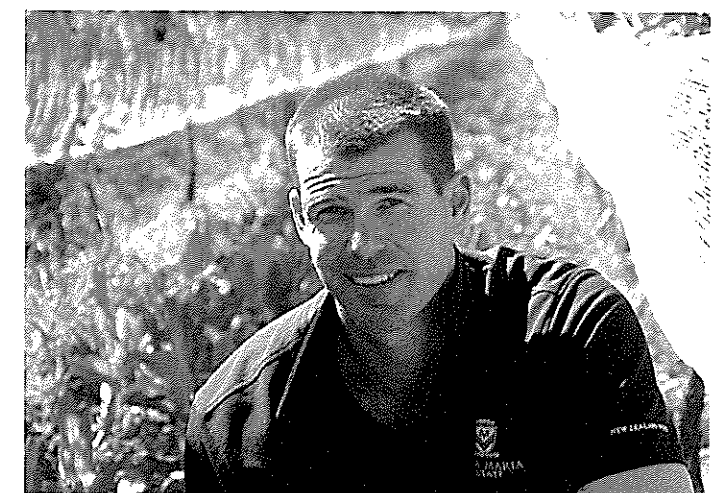
- Cover crops for autumn
- Marketing the organic story
- Organic Exporters Association
- Enjoy this moment

## NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

Harvest has reached us for 2016. After all the hard work over the last nine months, it is now time to capture that effort and capture the expression of the season.

And it has been a season with much variation across the regions – some warmer than average, and some playing catch-up til recent weeks. Some areas have been experiencing drought and others significant rainfall. The challenges that nature throws us each and every season are diverse. These test and hone our skills as farmers and as winegrowers.

Our focus remains to make the highest quality wine possible, organically and biodynamically. New Zealand's wine industry continues to experience very positive steady growth in our export markets. It is also interesting that bulk wine sales have also increased with this growth. Our strength and sustainability as a NZ wine brand rely on our identity. It relies on our stories, our people and places. It relies on our wines having integrity. We must keep the long term health of our industry as a focus.



So let's enjoy harvest with our teams. Reflect on the hard work achieved in the vineyard, as we take the grapes to the magical process of winemaking. As that celebration comes to an end, we will be straight back to looking after our soils and vines to ensure they have the energy and vitality for the next season.

*Jonathan Hamlet  
Villa Maria Estate  
Chair, Organic Winegrowers New Zealand*



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# ENJOY THIS MOMENT

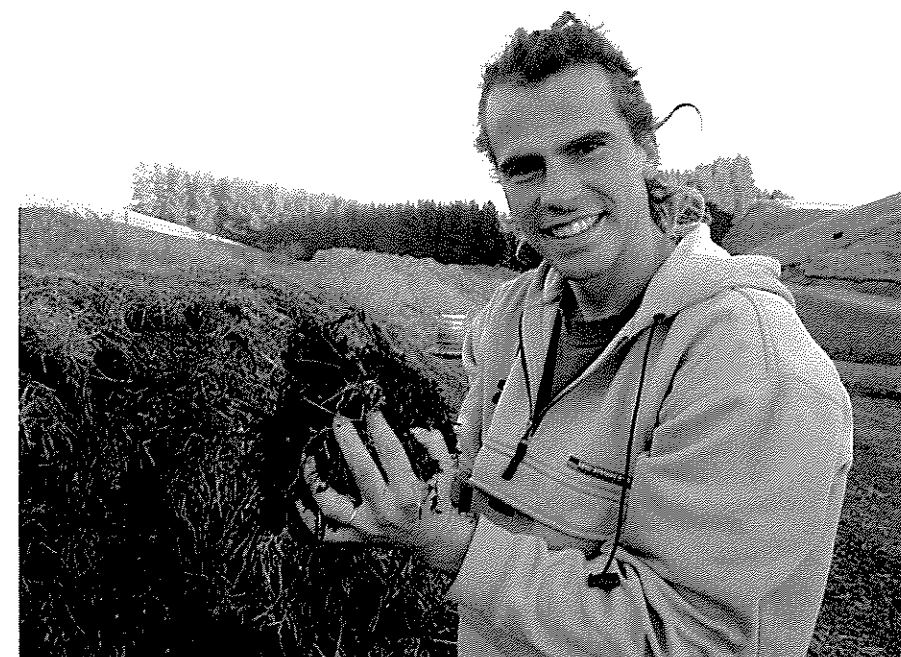
By Fabiano Frangi  
Vineyard Manager, Clos Henri  
OWNZ Marlborough representative

Amongst all the jobs one can choose, winegrowing is probably not the most financially rewarding, but it can certainly be very rewarding personally.

I like to believe that is the main reason many of us have chosen this as our livelihood. The pride this job can make you feel, even simply through a compliment from someone totally new to your produce, can't be quantified in dollars.

Besides another handful of jobs that can still give the same feeling of wellbeing, winegrowing gives you that great feeling of responsibility. We may want to see it this way or not, but we still farm a plant by heavily manipulating the manner it grows to suit our needs. Then we harvest the fruit and guide the transformation of it into something completely different, and with it we go to the consumers, hopefully receiving good appreciation.

Of course, the higher the calibre of the other party, the greater will be the level of satisfaction any time I hear someone say, "This is very good!" I push my mind back to the cold morning of the pruning or the rainy days of wrapping, to my swearing because the plough broke down



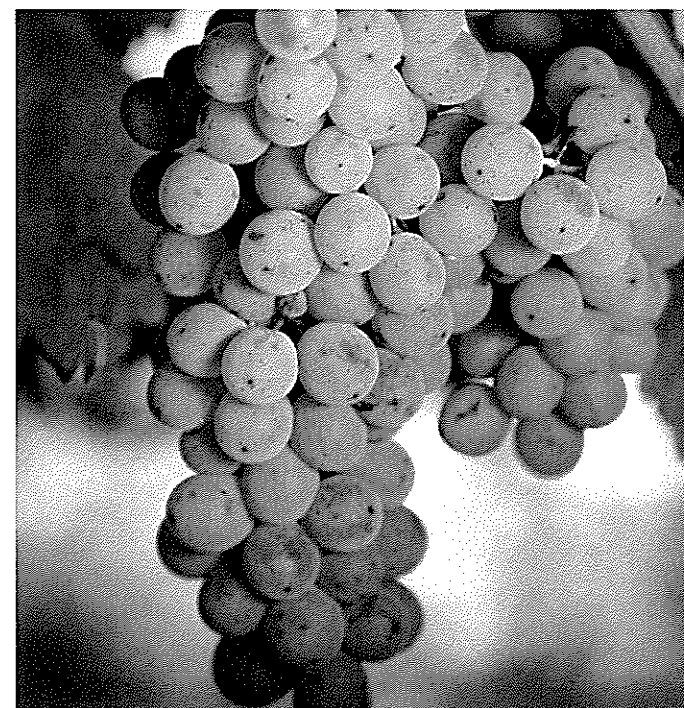
still in the row or while dealing with blocked nozzles in the middle of the night; I think of my colleagues always there to solve the problems and later laugh about it; my daughter not yet two years old, dirty with grease and dust, "helping me" to get ready for the following Monday; and I would like to answer "Yes, I know it's great, what the heck." Maybe I am not very humble, but I am sure I am not arrogant, nor alone.

I work mostly in the vineyard, and as I am writing we are at that particular time of the season when we can afford to take a breath before the last effort to pass the grapes to the winemaking team. There is not much we can do now (early March) to dramatically change the quality of the harvest, apart from dropping some fruit, which we are lucky to have in excess this year.

These times don't come around very often, and I believe we have to be able to step back a second and just appreciate what was done in the last eight months or so.

I deeply believe our businesses do benefit from these rare moments as much as from a wine award. Don't get me wrong, I like accolades and the like; but later there will be a time for these if we are fortunate enough to deserve them. Instead this short time that can be just for us and our teams will never be here again. We need to be capable of celebrating our efforts, and the more we did, the more we should.

Someone very clever said: Everybody wants to live on the top of the mountain, but the true happiness lays in the way the slope was climbed.





# COVER CROPS

## Options for bringing life into the autumn soil



By Maren Ricken, Kiwi Seed

Getting autumn cover crops sown in vineyards can often be a mission. There is netting and obviously harvest happening at the perfect sowing time for annual and perennial legumes.

Legumes such as clovers, lupins, peas and vetch are probably the most important ingredients in a cover crop mix. Together with appropriate bacteria, these legumes will fix approximately 25 kg N per tonne dry matter produced. The best thing of all is that this happens the natural way.

Planning, timing and a wise selection of plant species are the main factors in successful establishment of any cover crop, regardless of the crop's purpose.

The main purposes of autumn sown cover crops have always included:

- protection from erosion through water and wind, especially in newly established vineyards;
- weed control;
- improving soil fertility and the nutrient cycle in general;
- improving soil structure, stability and water-holding capacity.

All cover crops enhance biological diversity and activity in root zones. They provide habitat for beneficial insects to combat pests and diseases the natural way. Insectary mixes based on buckwheat, phacelia and alyssum are well proven thanks to research inputs from Dr Steve Wratten of Lincoln University and others. To increase diversity I like to add different annual clovers, herbs and wildflowers to those mixes – and yes they are colourful and nice to look at.

Different cover crops require different sowing dates. Here are two of many rules I work with:

- 1) The bigger the seed, the deeper it will need to be buried in the ground, therefore the later it can be sown. This has to do with the higher moisture content and higher



Above: Prima gland clover cover crop. Facing page: Crimson clover. Photos courtesy of Kiwi Seed.

temperatures further down in the soil.

- 2) For successful establishment, plants need to be sown when they want to grow and not when they are about to go dormant.

Lupins, peas and cereals are all fairly big seeds and can be sown during warmer and colder parts of the year. The timeframe for this is early March to end of May here in Marlborough.

Small seeds such as clover, plantain, yarrow, winter-active fescue, cocksfoot, etc. are better sown in autumn while surface temperatures are still warm enough and autumn rains are available. This way they can establish themselves before it gets too cold. This makes early March through early April the ideal sowing time here in Marlborough for autumn cover crops and perennial swards.

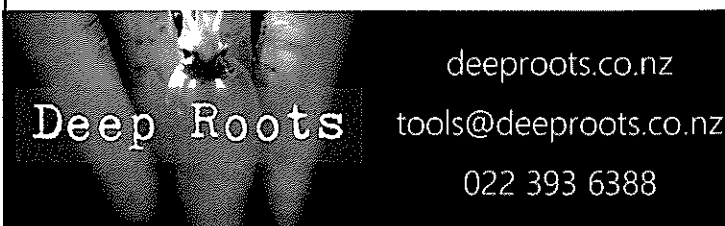
Timing for spring sowing depends largely on temperature and moisture availability. Plants like buckwheat don't tolerate frost, so planting needs to be delayed until after the last expected frost.

The local organic community in Marlborough has been very active in using autumn sown cover crops in the last few years. Many of you have been trialling different mixtures on different blocks, such as blue



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lupin or peas, with cereals such as ryecorn, Omaka barley and black oats. This type of mix has a couple of advantages; it can be sown in a single pass due to similar sowing depth requirements for all species, and it produces great amounts of biomass.

Sadly blue lupins have become quiet expensive this year. One solution to this is to use clovers in a mix with cereals. Kiwi Seed has put great time and effort into sourcing clovers which are winter-active and ready to flower as early as September.

We are also working on a new venture called purple vetch, which we believe has great potential to be a successful cover crop option in the organic and conventional growing sector in the future. We know this vetch is sowable in autumn and spring.

A biomass cover crop is usually followed by fallow or an insectary mix, and then turned into a perennial sward the following autumn. For this great plant material is available. A winter-active fescue – which is truly summer dormant – together with other specialty grasses, clovers, herbs and beneficial plants make a great mix.

Below: Winter-active fescue cover crop



Every vineyard is unique in its growing conditions. Soil type, water availability, fertility, temperature and management – all of these factors change, often even within blocks. Agriculture is very complex. We have seen a lot go wrong in the past and learned from that. This is why we don't sell a mix off the shelf and instead look at what's available and what's needed, in order to create the best possible mix of cultivars.

Years ago Kiwi Seed specialised in dryland legumes and grasses, like early flowering clovers, e.g. prima gland, crimson, cefalu arrowleaf, winter-active fescue and winter-active non-clumpy cocksfoot, just to name a few. For more information, have a look at our website, www.kiwiseed.co.nz, or contact us directly.

As I said in the beginning, success lies in planning, selection of right plant material and timing.

Start planning now – I am happy to help.

Contact me on 0274 322 017/ 03 578 0468 or maren@kiwiseed.co.nz.

# Organic Certifier's Update

By Jared White  
BioGro NZ  
OWNZ Executive Committee member

Vineyard audits are almost complete for the season and all certificates will be issued before vintage. Fruit quality and yield are looking excellent, and it is great to see organic growers have generally avoided powdery mildew issues in another high-pressure season. It is always wonderful to see the enthusiasm that organic producers have for their vineyards and wine.

Anne de Ferron, who has covered viticulture and winemaking for BioGro in our Wellington office, has left BioGro to take up a position with MPI. We are grateful for her excellent work over the last few years. Marcus Coomer will be the interim office contact for organic winegrowers until a replacement for Anne is appointed. Contact marcus@biogro.co.nz / 04 801 0744.

Our new registered wine additions programme is receiving positive feedback from winemakers, with more

than 200 products now registered. To view a complete list of BioGro-registered winemaking products, visit <http://www.biogro.co.nz/search/inputs> and use search term "addition." We expect that more products will be registered by suppliers in the coming months. Certified winemakers receive a login to the members-only area where they can obtain approval for products they wish to use for the upcoming vintage.

Several new vineyards have registered for conversion this year, and this reflects the ongoing interest in organic viticulture as well as the buzz generated by last year's excellent organic and biodynamic viticulture conference in Marlborough. There are now more than 160 certified organic vineyards in New Zealand, and more than 60 wineries registered for organic wine production.

I am always available for technical questions and love to hear from you.

Jared White, BioGro NZ  
jared@ts.co.nz / 021 706 049

Below: The online directory of BioGro-certified organic winemaking inputs

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Find certified inputs and Registered Wine Additions

addition

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234 Inputs found

Wine Addition

233

Farmlands Co-Operative Society Ltd - BioGro No. 4472

Citric Acid (Acid regulation)

Input Expiry Date: 01 December 2017

Permitted

Potassium Bicarbonate (Acid regulation)

Input Expiry Date: 01 December 2017

Restricted

BioGro Comment:

Not to be used in NOP/COR wines

Photos, counterclockwise from top right: Pyramid Valley team head out to spread biodynamic preparations on the land; Hans and Therese Herzog at Herzog Wines home vineyard in Marlborough; family sorting operation at Te Whare Ra; winemaker Rudi Bauer and companions making biodynamic cow pat pit at Quartz Reef in Central Otago



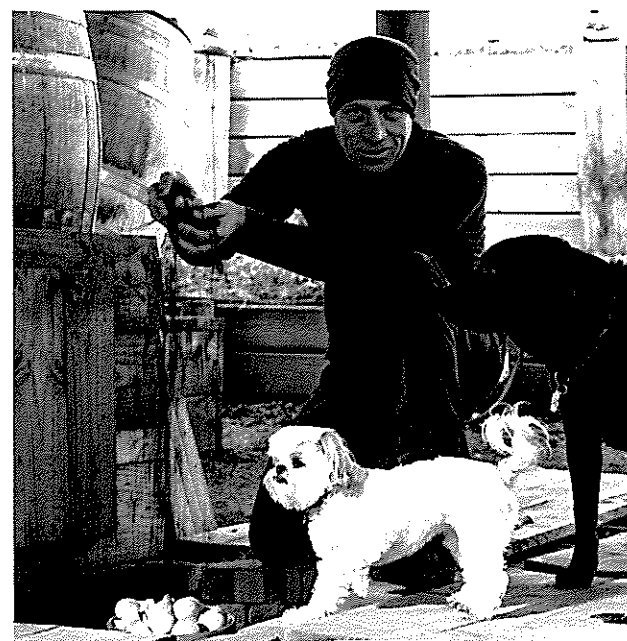
The NEW website for Organic Winegrowers New Zealand is up now. Please check it out on [www.organicwinenz.com](http://www.organicwinenz.com) and help us share it around.

The site includes a full updated list of our certified organic producer members, with links to producers' websites.

Thanks to all of the OWNZ members who sent us photos for the website. The site will continue to evolve, and we'll continue working on OWNZ publicity brochures for overseas markets – so members are always welcome to send us your high-quality photos so that we can show the world what high-quality organic growing looks like.

Member feedback on the website is welcome.

Here are a few of your photos which didn't all make it onto the website yet, but which celebrate you lovely people (and dogs) who make it all happen.



## MEMBER NEWS

Neudorf have recently attained full BioGro organic certification for their home vineyard. Congratulations to the team.

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It's great to be able to spotlight accolades on some of our newer successful entrants to organic growing. **Schubert Wines'** first fully organic certified vintage was in 2013, adding to the growing organic scene in the Wairarapa. Here's a new review from Robert Parker's Wine Advocate, reviewed by Lisa Perrotti-Brown MW in the *Best of New Zealand 2015* and scoring 93+ points:

"Kai Schubert continues to produce a beautiful, perfumed and earthy style Pinot from the alluvial Martinborough outskirts."

### 2013 Pinot Noir Marion's Vineyard

A beautiful pale ruby color, the 2013 Marion's Block Pinot Noir has a beguiling nose of crushed cranberries, red currants and lavender with Provence herbs, underbrush and damp soil hints. Light to medium-bodied, it fills the palate with lively red berry and earth laced flavors supported with silky tannins and great freshness, finishing with wonderful length.

### 2013 Pinot Noir Block B

Medium ruby coloured, the 2013 Pinot Noir Block B has beautiful scents of lavender, roses and dried leaves over a core of red currants, cranberries and red cherries plus a waft of mossy bark. Medium-bodied, it gives a great intensity of red berry and earth flavors with a solid backbone of finely grained tannins and racy acid, finishing long and layered.

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Another newcomer to be proud of: **The Supernatural** attained full BioGro certification for their vineyard in Hawkes Bay in 2015. They released their first fully certified wine in 2015, the Spook Light (Pinot Gris). They received two 90 point reviews for their 2014 Green Glow (Sauvignon Blanc) which has C2 organic conversion status, and the fully certified organic Green Glow 2015 featured in *The Summit*.

## MEMBER TRADES

### 2016 FRUIT FOR SALE

Bellbird Spring (BioGro#5542) has up to 10 tonnes of 2016 harvest Sauvignon Blanc fruit for sale. The property in the Waipara Valley, North Canterbury, is compliant with the following standards: BioGro Organic, IFOAM, MPI OOAP – USDA NOP.

Please contact Guy Porter ([guy@bellbirdspring.co.nz](mailto:guy@bellbirdspring.co.nz)) for further details.

.....

I have approx 20 tonne organic 2016 Sauvignon Blanc for sale. Please contact [info@greenhough.co.nz](mailto:info@greenhough.co.nz).

Andrew Greenhough  
Greenhough Vineyard  
Nelson

### WINE FOR SALE

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Clean skin  
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# The Organic Narrative

## A hospitality perspective

By Stephen Wong, Wine Sentience

"Organic status, does it matter on a wine list?" This was the question put to attendees at last year's Organic Winegrowing Conference. The short answer is, "It can, if you know how to craft a narrative around why it matters." For this to be effective, let's have a quick discussion on consumer behaviour and motivations in making purchasing decisions — or, to eschew sterile marketing parlance, "Why do we choose to drink what we do? What matters to us?"

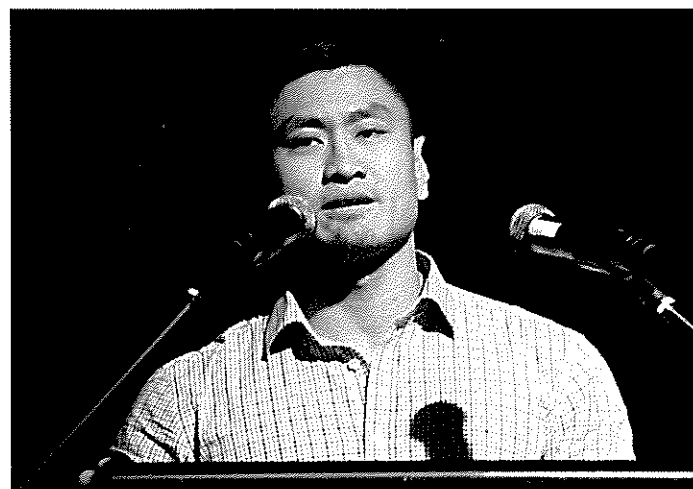
### Consumer Motivations

A quick scan of existing writing on consumer motivation, both in wine and other food industries, reveals a pretty simple list of priorities. Most have the following in descending order of importance:

- A.) Price and availability
- B.) Flavour or deliciousness (i.e. quality)
- C.) Effects (on health and on the environment)
- D.) Philosophical appeal (ethics)

A quick analysis of these four points reveals why they are arranged in this order of priority. Price and availability are physical limitations; if a product is priced beyond budget, or impossible to obtain, it is simply not an option. Digging further reveals that the lowest-priced and most ubiquitous products can sometimes lose out to the halo of desirability attached to less common, or even slightly higher-priced items. However, that halo effect itself still exists within budgetary and availability constraints, as the concepts of affordability and convenience are universal, even if their thresholds differ from person to person. In other words, price yourself just below the budgetary limit of your target market, and be available without being everywhere.

Flavour, which is an innate quality parameter of wine, certainly is important. However, this is secondary to price/availability simply because drinkers, once they have decided on wine, will often compromise on taste rather than forgo consumption altogether if nothing in their price range suits their taste preferences. They may be disappointed by the selection, but will almost always still have a drink. It is less common to find drinkers who upon arriving at a restaurant or a wine store, refuse to drink outright because none of the available options meet their quality standards. Examples of this rarer type of drinker



Above: Stephen Wong, pictured speaking at our Organic and Biodynamic Winegrowing Conference last winter. Stephen runs a small hospitality education and support business based in Wellington, Wine Sentience, training staff and managing wine lists around the country as well as hosting tastings and organising wine events for the public. He also just became a Master of Wine – congrats Stephen!

might opt to have a beer or a mixed drink instead, rather than a bad wine, but they are the minority.

This brings us to the discussion of effects on health, environment, and philosophical appeal. Where A) and B) are necessities — prerequisites with innate properties — C) and D) are conscious choices based on awareness and the possession of specialist knowledge. This itself limits their effect, as many drinkers simply do not possess the knowledge or awareness to consider these things without external assistance. Additionally, they only manifest when drinkers are faced with ample choices that fulfill price and quality requirements.

It is also arguable that where the first two are effectively universals with quantifiable parameters, the latter pair are highly subjective and much harder to quantify. It is interesting to note that perception and reality are often not aligned when it comes to discussions and investigations into effects on the environment. Consumers will act on perceived effects and perceived assumptions about products and companies because they rarely have the time to investigate the truth behind the marketing.

The production nature of most organic wine results in

default positives and negatives across these four areas; most noticeably, having a negative effect on price and availability while imparting a natural advantage in B), C) and D). Deliciousness should be a given. Organic winegrowing produces higher quality grapes and consequently, better tasting wine. The benefits to health and the environment, and the philosophical appeal, however, need to be conveyed to the consumer before they can make decisions based on those predications. Without the knowledge to correct their perception of these wines, no benefit will be realised.

"Wait," I hear you say, "but are there not many different kinds of consumers?" Different kinds of drinkers have different motivations, of course; everyday drinking, or special occasion drinking, etc. That is without question. Special occasion wines can be more expensive, harder to find, need to be more delicious, and perhaps possess some other qualities like prestige or desirability, or even historical significance (all aspects of philosophical

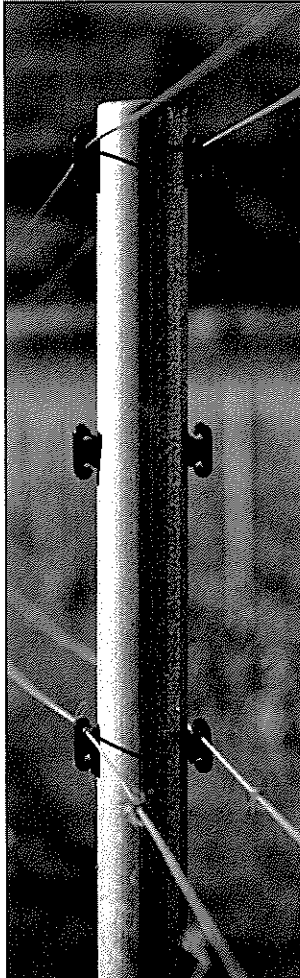
appeal); but they still have to fulfil these same criteria, just at a different threshold level.

So, to take stock of where we are — price and availability are the primary limiting factors. Quality should be a foregone conclusion; if the wine does not reflect the high quality of organic wines, then it has squandered its advantage. Before you go any further, make sure the wines are good. If you've got that under control, then we get to the subjective effects and philosophy, the stuff that makes your narrative, the organic narrative. Within this lies a rich story, a compelling reason for folks to engage and fall in love with you. This is something you have which sets you apart from

your neighbour, and from the conventionally farmed wines. But how do you translate this story into desire? The answer may surprise you with its simplicity. Keep it factual, honest and direct.

Continued on next page

**How do you translate your organic story into consumer desire? The answer may surprise you with its simplicity. Keep it factual, honest and direct.**



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Viticulturist, Villa Mario Group, Hawke's Bay



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To illustrate my point, let's take a short break and listen to a few experiences from people on the front lines.

I asked the following questions to provide food for thought:

- 1) What is your personal story with organic wine — what does it mean to you?**
- 2) Do customers care about organic wines, and why?**
- 3) When you talk to customers about organics, what kind of engagement do you get?**

*Iain Charlton*  
*Junior Sommelier at Whitebait*

- 1) Every major wine list I've worked with has had an organic focus. In terms of expectations, I usually think they're smaller producers, and more premium product. More care and attention is given to these wines in the production.
- 2) People do try to have an alignment with organic food, although they don't go out of their way to choose organic wine at this stage, mainly because they don't know that certain wines are. But when you tell them that a producer is organic, it piques their interest. Most consumers just don't possess the specialist knowledge to know which producers are or are not organic, biodynamic, etc.
- 3) With organics, people tend to know what that entails, because of their experience with organic food. But when I tell them someone is biodynamic, it really starts a discussion; they are interested to know more. In terms of expectations, I think because customers have often had organic wine and not realised that it was organic, they don't have as clear an expectation or understanding of how organics affects quality, yet. That's what we have to work on. Although organics clearly has health, lifestyle and environmental benefits, for consumers, it all comes down to quality at the end of the day. At a subconscious level, I think consumers definitely relate to the ethical benefits and sustainability of organic wine, but it's not as clear for them as it is with organic food production.

*James Hornblow*  
*Maitre'd at Charley Noble*

- 1) Not hugely involved, but I love the concept of it, it's a lot more hands on, lots of time and effort involved. I believe in it — I think it enhances the natural characteristics of vineyards, and the wines show more personality, year on year, than conventionally farmed wines.
- 2) Not too many people ask for organic wines specifically, but for my customers, I feel like it's a given. I think there is the assumption that wines are going more organic because a lot of the food movement is headed that way. I actually think here people assume we will select organic products.
- 3) It comes into my conversations with customers a lot. The back story is great for us to engage with them — I believe organics is part of why the quality is so high for some of these wines. I think customers, from a background in produce and food, expect that organic wine will be higher quality too, for that reason. Interestingly, with organics, I get acknowledgement and then we move on, as they kinda know what it means and what it involves. But when I tell them a wine is biodynamic or natural, then we get into a deeper conversation. There is increasing awareness in consumers about what is involved in organics, but they're still all learning more and are interested in learning more.

*Sylvaine Novel*  
*Wine Buyer at Annam*

- 1) On a personal level, they can bring more to the glass, more complexity, quality etc., especially with biodynamics. I find that they are more drinkable and more enjoyable, not in a tasting panel, but in a real world setting.
- 2) Consumers are already very accepting and understanding with organics in food and general life, but they have only started thinking about it with wine. Why is that?
- 3) Yes, but some consumers still just drink it; they don't think a huge amount about wine. As long as they can afford it, they will start to do so; they already do it with food, but not as much yet with wine. Price is a factor, and convenience as well. Younger families don't have as much money and time to devote to this, so we have to make it easier for them to engage.



Above: a sell-out crowd partook in the International Organic Wine Tasting at last year's Organic and Biodynamic Winegrowing Conference

*Brandon Nash*  
*Fine Wine Director & Proprietor, Dhall & Nash*

- 1) Here's a story. I went to Moore Wilsons' today to buy fish; as I walked past the aisle, kombucha caught my eye and the organic one is the one I want. Why did I choose organic? Because it is healthier for me, specifically in reference to preservatives, additions, etc.
- 2) In the context of doing in-store tastings, or talking to the consumers, I would always bring it up, I would always tell an organic story. In my experience, often it is not an area that consumers talk about at this stage. One in ten consumers will want to carry on that organic conversation. Actually, I would say that of all the benefits of organics, the consumer would feel that it was a healthier choice for them ahead of sustainability of the land.
- 3) They would say, "that's great!" and then move on. What is it that they're acknowledging when they say that? I know that they would assume it is a more premium priced product, because there is general acceptance that organic carries a premium. I think there is also the assumption now that organic means higher quality. Occasionally, you would have a customer having a bad experience with organic wine being of poor quality, although that has become very rare nowadays.

There is another statement, one which I think sums it up quite well, from Ian Carnegie, who is currently managing Whitebait Restaurant, but who has in his career been maitre'd at Matterhorn, Ancestral, and The White House. He summed it up: "There is a growing interest in organic wine, along with interest in organics in general. But as for expectations and reasons, it's very personal; different people care about organics for different reasons. Take for example, the most recent person I recall asking about organic wines... she was interested in everything, asking questions about almost the entire menu."

## Be Real

So this brings us back to the question at hand. How do you craft a marketing message for customers with differing expectations and different philosophical alignments? Do you appeal to the health aspect, or the environmental aspect? Do you focus on the ethics of small business, site specificity, or drink local / eat local? My opinion is that the answer lies in making it relatable and relevant to the unconverted, yet honest and transparent to the knowledgeable. The easiest way to do this is to

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**There is a growing interest in organic wine, along with interest in organics in general. But as for expectations and reasons, it's very personal; different people care about organics for different reasons.**

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approach it without worrying about choosing a particular marketing message. You are the marketing message; your wines, your commitment to organics, your journey to this point in time and your reasons — this is something you already have and already know, it just needs to be put together into a coherent whole.

As Anna Flowerday has boldly stated in a Te Whare Ra tweet, "Authentic wines made with cow shit, not bull shit." Veracity, trustworthiness and honesty are powerful, particularly today. We live in a media-rich world, which is both democratic and unedited — a double-edged sword. On the one hand, everyone has a voice, and increasingly, these voices are treated more equally than before. The rules of new media have narrowed the perceptual gap between expert and amateur. The general public of

today are also bombarded with much more conflicting information than ever before, without the time or the savvy to know how to distinguish between different levels of quality of information. A quick look at the soaring debates surrounding many hot topics of today – the TPPA, fracking, GMO, vaccines, privacy, climate change – only show how confused the information landscape is today.

So how do you cut through all the bullshit? How do you make sure that you are heard above the din? One proven way is to do it one person at a time. We forget sometimes, in this highly connected world, where messages can potentially reach millions, and mass media glorifies its own incredible reach, that we are dealing with real people.

When you click, every view is a person. Remember this when you communicate online; talk to them like a human being when you taste at cellar door, or in-store; find out more about the people you are asking to represent your wines in a restaurant. These are your ambassadors; if they don't believe in you, they won't sell your story. After all, we are all just people trying to get through life, so take the time to make real connections and you'll see the value they bring. Technology is there to aid human interaction, not replace it.

## Collective Power

But that doesn't mean that you have to do it alone, either. There is power in the collective. Harness it. If there is one thing that the organic wine movement lacks at the moment, it is visibility and unity. I don't mean that everyone has to tell the same story, or fall in line. Sometimes, all it takes is a reminder that we are not alone, as has been seen often throughout history, when people gather together, either in peace or in protest, it is empowering in the extreme not just for ourselves but for others on the outside. The organic wine community is not small, so why are we not visible?

Lastly, I'll leave you with one more thought: continue to ask and learn. As this movement grows, so too will the enthusiast's desire to know more, to ask more questions. A direct, simple message might be good enough to capture imaginations and get the attention of drinkers, but to hold them, there has to be depth and substance behind the initial message. When they ask the hard questions, we need to have answers, and these have to be honest and true. What we think might change in time as well, and we should be open to that. Yearn for the truth, but avoid dogma. I think Oscar Wilde said it best: "the truth is rarely pure, and never simple."



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# The Organic Exporters Association of New Zealand

*There's a lot of work done behind the scenes, in government and the private sector, to allow New Zealand organic producers to enjoy privileged market access in other countries. One of the organisations helping that process along is the Organic Exporters Association. We invited OEA executive director Rick Carmont to explain OEA's work.*

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By Rick Carmont

The Organic Exporters Association of New Zealand (OEA) was formed in 1992 to encourage and support companies and organisations that have an interest in exporting New Zealand-made certified organic products. The OEA is the membership-based business association for the organic exporting (and importing) sector in New Zealand. OEA has a mission to promote and protect organic international trade to benefit the New Zealand organic sector.

OEA members market an impressive variety of products, including lamb, beef, poultry, fresh fruit and vegetables, frozen and canned vegetables, honey, dairy products, eggs, grain, baby food, juice, vinegar, flaxseed oil, herbal teas and wool.

The OEA Executive Board is comprised of elected members representing industry, government and certification bodies. I was speaking with Daniel (his English name) the

other day, an export manager of a Canterbury-based business. The business is involved in the export of a number of commodities shipping to China. Daniel asked me about exporting organic products to China. Daniel said he had contacted the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI), who had explained that as there was no government-to-government agreement with China yet, they recommended he contact the Organic Exporters Association. His certifier also made the same recommendation. I shared with him that helping exporters find economic and efficient paths to international organic markets is one of our five core functions. The other four functions are:

- Representing organic exporters and advising MPI on market access priorities for the organic export industry.
- Linking organic foreign buyer representatives with New Zealand organic suppliers.
- Encouraging and supporting organic export growth by providing regular market reports and networking opportunities to organic exporters.
- Helping organic exporters to identify the best organic certification options to meet the requirements for access to foreign markets.

Daniel asked how we work with MPI. I stated that in 2001, with funding of \$250,000 from the Organic Exporters, MPI (then MAF Food) developed the Official Organic Assurance Programme (OOAP). The OEA continues to provide market value details, helps identify market access trends, and advises MPI on market access priorities. MPI

negotiates and manages government-to-government organic exporting agreements. To date, at the request and encouragement of OEA, MPI has secured access to five markets: the EU, Switzerland, the USA, Japan and Taiwan. MPI is currently working on securing access to two new and important markets: China & Korea.

The OEA invests in promoting New Zealand organic products in global markets, connecting buyers and sellers in order to reap a good return for the organic sector, and creating new organic customers around the world. New Zealand-based organic businesses export to about 50 countries. The OEA continues to work with all these markets. Also, we track, support and provide advice to assist members to attend about a dozen trade shows around the world.

Daniel asked for some more examples. Here they are:

- In 2008, we provided extensive reports and months of communications directly to MFAT in Taipei, which was rewarded early in 2009 when MPI (then NZFSA) successfully negotiated a trade deal with Taiwan officials, creating the Taiwan organic export arrangement.
- In 2009, we funded the travel of some of the party of a South Korean Official Visit to look at the New Zealand model as a step toward an organic equivalence application. At the time South Korea had no framework for an organic equivalence agreement with any other

country. MPI continues to negotiate technical differences between the South Korean regulations and the OOAP. South Korea have indicated that they will be looking for full bilateral equivalence. Any agreement will, however, only cover processed products (including wine); it will not cover fresh fruit and vegetables. This negotiation is progressing, but no timetable for agreement has been indicated.

- In 2012, MPI identified that upcoming regulatory changes in Europe meant that market access for wine (made from organic grapes) was in jeopardy. MPI alerted OEA and NZ Winegrowers and the certification bodies that in order to fix this, a technical chapter on 'organic wine' and a scope extension dossier to the European Commission would be needed. The Chair of OWNZ contacted OEA for guidance and assistance. There was a question on how the work on this was going to be funded. MPI worked with both certification bodies (AsureQuality and BioGro), New Zealand Winegrowers, and Organic Winegrowers New Zealand to prepare a new chapter to the OOAP Technical Rules for organic wine, which was published in August 2014. At the same time MPI and MFAT, with help from New Zealand Winegrowers, worked to secure market access to Europe for organic wine.

- In 2014, two OEA representatives self-funded an exploratory visit to China and met with officials in the Chinese government to discuss a pathway towards an

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organic equivalence agreement. Arguably, this got the ball rolling for MPI and the Chinese government beginning discussions around organic equivalence in mid-2015. Government-to-government negotiations continue in 2016.

• In 2015 we invested in further building our relationships through two visits to the US. In March, one OEA representative self-funded a visit to participate in the US industry discussions on organic regulatory review and to build relationships with key industry contacts. In July, two OEA representatives visited with key US trade and industry leaders at their premises to gain critical US domestic support for a NZ-US organic equivalence agreement. This trip was partially self-funded and partially funded by MFAT. Progress on MPI's application to the US government continues in 2016. Did you know that New Zealand is the third largest origin of organic wine imported into the US, after the heavyweights France and Italy, and ahead of Spain, Australia and Chile!?

The OEA works directly with foreign industry to gain in-market support for improved organic trade arrangements. We also meet with the relevant in-market organic trade associations and with foreign officials when appropriate. The aim of this is to complement the efforts of the New Zealand government through both MPI and MFAT.

Daniel then asked how BioGro & AsureQuality fit in. Neither focus directly on market access and trade development, but both have their senior leaders on our executive team and are members with us. Both do have an important role to play in securing access to overseas markets. AsureQuality and BioGro both maintain accreditation to various national and international organic standards. This means that AsureQuality and BioGro can certify products to organic standards that are acceptable in the destination market. Without organic certification, the products aren't organic.

Which brings me to the next important bit of work that OEA is currently involved in: working together with Organics Aotearoa New Zealand (OANZ) to find ways to further support and strengthen organic certification in New Zealand for the benefit of the entire organic sector. We are working with AsureQuality and BioGro to explore a shared organic standard, and encouraging a common understanding of what 'organic' means.

OEA also works with OANZ to contribute to preparing

the New Zealand Organic Market Report, the next edition of which will be launched in April 2016. OEA continues to co-fund this comprehensive, periodic review of the organic sector and assist in gathering and providing some of the key export data.

In October each year, we culminate the year with our annual function following the members-only Annual General Meeting. This invitation-only, complementary gala event is used to showcase different organic export sectors and provides an opportunity for companies to network with each other. MPI presents the Annual Report on the OOAP, including key work programme progress and export data from the previous year. In 2015 this was held in Christchurch; the next gala event is planned to be held in Auckland in October 2016.

Daniel asked how many wine companies were members of OEA. None! I lamented. We have members from every other sector representing organics, including emerging sectors like aquaculture, but no wine companies. (However, Organic Winegrowers New Zealand is an associate member.) About 20 organic wineries regularly communicate and seek advice from us, and we understand that there are about 50 organic wineries exporting today.

OEA appreciates that the organic wine sector has a unique structure, in that many wine companies take on the role as both the grower and the exporter. As an organisation, we focus on exports, not the grower. As a sign of good faith we will continue to provide support to the organic wine sector. Other resources that we provide – like an up to date repository on over 90 markets and their organic status, and a range of other valuable resources, are secured by password and only available to members. Our website features include a member-only section and self-management of your business details, with the ability to update your contact details and company profile on our site.

OEA and Organic Winegrowers New Zealand (OWNZ) have negotiated a promotional arrangement for OWNZ members. OWNZ members that apply online before 30th April 2016 and pay before 31st May 2016 will enjoy full membership through to 30th June 2017. The discounted rate will be valid for two financial years. See our website for details under membership: <http://www.organictradenz.com/membership.html>.

# GLYPHOSATE WATCH



By Rebecca Reider  
OWNZ Coordinator

Need another reason to go organic?! As conventional viticulture's favourite herbicide continues to come under fire worldwide, we'll continue to share the news.

Here's some of the latest:

Europe – The Netherlands, Sweden and France signalled earlier this month that they will vote against the relicensing of glyphosate in the EU. Public pressure against glyphosate in countries across Europe has been intense.

Germany – In February, the Munich Environmental Institute (Umweltinstitut München) released results of laboratory testing that it performed on 14 of the most sold beers in Germany. Residues of glyphosate were found in all of the 14 beers tested.

USA – Last September, the California state government announced that it would start labelling glyphosate-based herbicides as cancer-causing. In January, Monsanto, manufacturer of leading glyphosate-based herbicide Roundup, filed a lawsuit seeking to block the labelling.

New Zealand – As this newsletter went to press, the Christchurch City Council had just voted 12-1 to stop using glyphosate-based sprays in public places. If the city's Draft Annual Plan is adopted, Christchurch would be the largest NZ city so far to take this step.

*The following is excerpted from a recent article that I wrote on glyphosate for the NZ Herald. You can find the full article, "The glyphosate debate," online on [www.nzherald.co.nz](http://www.nzherald.co.nz).*

A new campaign by the Green Party, calling for greater caution around Roundup and other glyphosate-based herbicides, is in its early days. However, early reactions to the campaign have already provided ample evidence of the messy interface between science, journalism and politics.

In January, the Greens launched a petition calling for an end to the use of glyphosate in public places such as parks and roadsides, and calling on the EPA to formally reassess the chemical's safety.

Pundits were quick to jump to the defence of agriculture's

favourite spray - it's the most-used herbicide in the world. In response to the Greens' campaign, the government-funded Science Media Centre released a primer prominently featuring the she'll-be-right perspective of Kerry Harrington, a Weed Science lecturer at Massey University.

Harrington's comments inspired such headlines as the Manawatu Standard's "Glyphosate spraying risk the same as being a hairdresser." The implicit assumption: because one organisation, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), has identified both glyphosate use and hairdressing as "probable" cancer risks, the two activities carry the same risk level.

Much hinges on one ambiguous but carefully chosen word: "probable." Glyphosate became the focus of international scrutiny in March 2015, when, after a comprehensive review, the IARC's panel of international experts declared that glyphosate is "probably carcinogenic." In official terms, according to the IARC, "probably" means that according to the scientific literature, there is "limited evidence of carcinogenicity in humans and sufficient evidence of carcinogenicity in experimental animals."

In the year since the IARC report came out, the international reaction has been strong. The reaction has been swiftest in the EU. France has moved to stop selling glyphosate over the counter to the public; other countries are exploring similar actions; and a growing number of cities, most notably Barcelona and Edinburgh, have decided to stop using glyphosate sprays altogether.

However, the focus on the IARC report has also drawn attention away from a growing wider body of research on glyphosate's effects. The Greens' recent report compiles a long list of peer-reviewed scientific studies of health harms. Multiple studies from South America show damage to DNA in farmworkers and their children living near glyphosate-sprayed areas. In the lab, glyphosate has been found to damage human and animal DNA, affect the human endocrine system, and cause malformations of developing animal embryos.

The EPA won't yet comment on the Greens' report. But ultimately the future of New Zealand's go-to weedkiller will be in their hands.

For now, the agency is keeping quiet on whether they will in fact choose to reassess glyphosate - which would entail a long and detailed review of the science, and a public consultation.



